The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. VI. BOSTON, MARCH, 1898. No. 10

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second-class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

GEO. H. ELLIS, PRINTER, 141 FRANKLIN ST., BOSTON.

CONTENTS OF NO. 10.

LENT 113
SONS OF GOD 113
THE STILL HOUR 114
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 115
AMUSEMENT COLUMN 119
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL 120
NATURAL HISTORY: NOTES ON CLAM-SHELLS . 121
IMPORTANT NOTICES 124

LENT.

Is this a Fast, to keep
The larder lean
And clean
From fat of neats and sheep?
Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragg'd to go,
Or show
A downcast look and sour?
No: 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate;
To circumcise thy life;
To starve thy sin,
Not *bin;*
And that's to keep thy Lent!

—*Robert Herrick*, 1648.

SONS OF GOD.

During long days and years we feel after God, if haply we may find him, not knowing that he is not far from any one of us. At last an hour comes in which we are able to cast all our care on him who careth for us. In the anguish of some great sorrow or the pressure of temptation, we have cried to God out of the depths, and then found ourselves able to speak to him, and tell him all our needs, confess all our sins, and trust in his fatherly love.

Happy moment, though born out of the deepest struggle and darkest unbelief! Sweet and strange experience, which lifts the veil from the unknown and shadowy world of heavenly realities, and brings them all so near! And yet there is nothing supernatural about it. The unnatural thing is that we should be willing to stand so far away from the Divine Love, and adore him at a distance with ritual and ceremony, instead of walking with him "as with a brother and a friend."

It is a pleasure sometimes to put our hand into the hand of a friend, wiser and better than ourselves, and be led. Better sometimes to lean on love than to lean on science. Better to be in some things like the little child described by Tennyson, walking with her father and mother, and feeling perfectly safe, though not knowing where she is going:—

> "And in their double love secure,
> The little maiden walked demure,
> Pacing with downward eyelids pure."

And then the poet describes how this sweet unity of father, mother, and child seemed to explain the mystery of being, which had baffled his intellect. "The dull and bitter voice" of doubt and perplexity was silenced. Another voice of trust and hope whispered to his heart, "Be of better cheer." Some-

thing of this we all have felt; or, if to any of us this experience has not come yet, it will come, it must come.

This is the way of salvation,—not by anxiety, but by confidence; not by fear, but by hope; not by dwelling on our own unworthiness, but by coming to God as to a forgiving Father. It is safety to live in the smile of heaven, in the sunshine of divine love, in a world full of peace and inward contentment and assurance. God is goodness, and all men naturally love goodness. If any one thinks he hates God, it is because God does not appear to him good; that is, because he does not really see God, but sees something else which he calls God. Nor is it possible for God to hate any of his children. No good mother and father ever hated their child, no matter how wicked he might be. How far less possible is such a feeling in the heart of the infinite Father!

Some men may have more of this sense of a divine presence and providence than others; but every one has more of it than he would have had if Jesus had not lived. Reliance on the infinite wisdom and love makes us able to do all things and bear all things. By what is called evil and what is called good, by pain and joy, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, we are ennobled and purified; for all things work together for good to them that love God.

But the danger is that the Christian life may be made to consist wholly in feelings of love and trust, that the discipline of faithful and honest conduct will be forgotten, and that religion will become a matter of emotion and sentiment instead of strict and faithful conduct.

Jesus says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, the meek, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness." "Love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself." "Do as you would be done by." "When you pray, pray in spirit and truth." "Forgive and be forgiven." And when he adds, "He who believes in me shall never die," and "He who believes in me has everlasting life abiding in him," certainly he does not mean by this any intellectual belief or opinion about himself, about his person or his work; but he means faith in that divine truth and love which dwelt in him, that heavenly spirit which was incarnate in him, that nobleness of soul which made him Immanuel.

In our highest and best hours God works with us and in us, and we also may work freely with him. We are fellow-workers with God, when we do right. We can hardly imagine it, and yet we may from our own experience partly understand it. Every moment in which we obey the law of right and deny a temptation to do wrong translates us out of time into eternity. Then we come in contact with God. Every throb of generous love, every sincere struggle to do good, makes us, as the apostle says, "partakers of the divine nature." "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God.*"—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

O Majesty unspeakable and dread!
Wert thou less mighty than thou art,
Thou wert, O Lord, too great for our belief,
Too little for our heart.

But greatness which is infinite makes room
For all things in its lap to lie:
We should be crushed by a magnificence
Short of infinity.

But what is infinite must be a home,
A shelter for the meanest life,
Where it is free to reach its greatest growth
Far from the touch of strife.

We share in what is infinite; 'tis ours,
For we and it alike are thine.
What I enjoy, great God, by right of thee,
Is more than doubly mine.

Thus doth thy hospitable greatness lie
Outside us, like a boundless sea:
We cannot lose ourselves where all is home,
Nor drift away from thee.

Thus doth thy grandeur make us grand ourselves,—
'Tis goodness bids us fear:
Thy greatness makes us brave as children are
When those they love are near.

Great God! our lowliness takes heart to play
Beneath the shadow of thy state:
The only comfort of our littleness
Is that thou art so great.

Then on thy grandeur I will lay me down,—
Already life is heaven for me,—
No cradled child more softly lies than I:
Come soon, Eternity!

—*F. W. Faber.*

The human soul cannot lose its essentially moral constitution.

Whatever touches and ennobles us in the lives and in the voices of the past is a divine birth from human doubt and pain.

Of all depressing scepticism, of all painful solicitude, not the agility of thought, but the alacrity of duty, is the fit antagonist.

The ills of life are not here on their own account, but are as a divine challenge and godlike wrestling in the night with our too reluctant wills.

Providence never permits the Spirit of Evil to wield for any length of time *both* the intellect and the will of vast multitudes of men; and the one is sure to betray the other.

To get good is animal; to do good is human; to be good is divine. The true use of a man's possessions is to help his work; and the best end of all his work is to show us what he is.

If our human experience teaches us anything certain, it is this: that it is Thought which kindles thought, and Love which elicits love, and Character which moulds and refines character.

The pains we spend upon our mortal selves will perish with ourselves; but the care we give out of a good heart to others, the efforts of disinterested duty, the deeds and thoughts of pure affection, are never lost.

No laborious travels are needed for the devout mind; for it carries within it Alpine heights and starlit skies, which it may reach with a moment's thought, and feel at once the loneliness of nature and the magnificence of God.

PRAYER.

Eternal God, who committest to us the swift and solemn trust of life, since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving thee is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of thy holy will, not waiting for to-morrow, but yielding to-day! Lay to rest, by the persuasion of thy spirit, the resistance of our passion, indolence, or fear. Consecrate with thy presence the way our feet may go; and the humblest work will shine, and the roughest places be made plain. Lift us above unrighteous anger and mistrust into faith and hope and charity by a simple and steadfast reliance on thy sure will; and so may we be modest in our time of wealth, patient under disappointment, ready for danger, serene in death. In all things draw us to the mind of Christ, that thy lost image may be traced again, and thou mayst own us as at one with him and thee. *Amen.*

—*James Martineau.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department, both* REQUESTS AND OFFERS, *to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Newtonville Branch. Address Miss Florence M. Pettee, Newtonville, Mass. "Eric," F. W. Farrar; "Effie and her Strange Acquaintances"; "An All-around Boy," R. R. Green; "The Desert Home," Capt. Mayne Reid; "The Tale of Troy," Aubrey Stewart; "Ten Little Boys"; "Little Robins Learning to Fly"; "Playing Santa Claus," Mrs. Doughty; "The Fitch Club"; "Pictures from the History of the Swiss"; "Five Little Chickens"; "Sixes and Sevens"; "Book for Blindman's Holiday"; "Battles at Home," Mary G. Darling; "Queer Pets at Marcy's," Olive Thorne Miller; "Gutenberg and the Art of Printing," E. A. Pearson; "Original Fables," Mrs. Prosser; "Little Robin"; "Birchwood"; "Some Friends of Mine," E. A. Hunter; "The Bears of Augustusburg," G. Nierity; "We Girls," Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney; "Vasco da Gama," George M. Towle; "May Morning," Mrs. Follen; "Miles Murchison," Agnes Giberne; "Dolls and Pets"; "Little Robins in the Nest"; "A Little Hero"; "Drake, the Sea King of Devon," G. M. Towle; "Children's Stories in American Literature," H. C. Wright; "Ways and Tricks of Animals," Mary Hooper; "Life and her Children," A. B. Buckley; "George Washington," H. E.

Scudder; "Play-room Book"; "The Magic Shoes, and Other Stories"; "Bible Animals," J. G. Wood; "Tales from the German"; Mrs. Leslie's "Book for Little Children."

The following books are offered by the King's Chapel Branch of the Cheerful Letter Society. Address Miss Rosamond Lang, 8 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.

Grammars.

German.—Eysenbach's "German Grammars"; Otto's "German Grammar"; Collar's "Eysenbach"; Follen's "Grammar"; Whitney's "Grammar"; Ahn's "Grammar and Method."

French.—Chardinal's "First French Course"; Fasquelle's "First French Course"; Noël and Chapsal's "Grammar"; Montonier's "Grammar"; Andrews and Batchelor's "Grammar"; Worman's "First French Lessons"; Roulier's "French Grammar"; Blouet's "French Grammar"; Otto's "French Grammar"; Williams's "French Grammar"; Pinney's "French Grammar"; Longfellow's "French Grammar"; "French Drill Book"; "Robertsonian Method"; Mme. de Peyrac's "Method"; Jewett's "Grammar"; Keetel's "French Method"; Hennequin's "Grammar"; Ahn's "System"; Duffet's "System"; Ollendorff's "Grammar"; Havet's "Grammar"; Hewins's "Grammar"; Wanostrocht's "Grammar."

Latin.—Jones's "Grammar"; Leighton's "Grammar"; Andrews and Stoddard's "Grammar"; Andrews's "Grammar"; Ginn and Heath's "Grammar"; Allen and Greenough's "Grammar"; Harkness's "Grammar"; Collar and Daniel's "Grammar"; Arnold's "Grammar"; Bennett's "Grammar."

Greek.—Hadley's "Grammar"; Goodwin's "Grammar"; White's "Grammar"; Harkness's "Grammar."

Readers.

German.—Worman's "First Reader"; William Deutsch's "Exercises"; Adler's "Readers"; "German Reader for Beginners"; Otto's "Materials for Translating English into German"; Wackernogel's "Reader."

French.—Ahn's "Reader"; Gilbert's "Second Reader"; "French Pronunciation Book"; Hachette's "Primer"; Henn's "First French Reader"; Pinney's "French Reader"; Bolmar's "French Fables"; Collot's "Reader"; Williams's "Reader"; Otto's "Reader"; Super's "First Reader"; "History of France," Fleury; Magill's "Prose and Poetry"; Sadler's "Translation from English into French."

Latin.—Andrews's "Viri Romæ"; Doderlein's "Synonymes"; Andrews's "Latin Reader"; Harkness's "Latin Reader"; Allen's "Latin Reader"; "Works of Horace," Chase; Gardner's "Selections from Latin Classic Authors"; "Gradations," Heath and Kingdon; "Ovid," Allen and Greenough; "Cicero"; "Selections from Ovid and Virgil"; "Cæsar," Allen and Greenough; Virgil's "Bucolics"; Allen and Greenough's "Primer"; "Cæsar's Commentaries," Harkness; "Cicero's Orations," Harkness; Gilder's "Primer"; "Gate to Cæsar," Collar; Arnold's "Latin Prose Compositions"; "M. Tulli Ciceronis," Crowell and Richardson; "Æneid of Virgil," Chase; "Cæsar's Gallic War," Kelsey; "Cornelii Nepotis Vitæ," Stuart; "Cicero's Orations"; "Eutropius," Greenough; "Legends from Ancient Rome," from Livy; "Extracts from Cicero"; "Practical Latin Compositions"; "Commodiæ," Collar; Homer's "Iliad," Keep; "Histories of Livy," Chase.

Greek.— Xenophon's "Anabasis," Goodwin; Moss's "Reader"; Jones's "Reader"; Merry's "Fourth Reader"; Coy's "First Reader"; Goodwin's "Reader"; "Xenophon"; "Herodotus," Dietsch; "Lysia" (story).

French Fiction.

"Conte de Fées"; "Rosa"; "Sur Mer," H. Malot.

Dictionaries.

Meadow's French "Dictionary"; Fleming and Libbius's "Dictionary"; Rubenshorst's German "Dictionary."

Miscellaneous Books.

"Translation of Livy"; "Key to Greenleaf's Elementary Grammar"; "Exercise in English Compositions"; Bigelow's "Handbook of Punctuation"; Hillard's "Fourth Reader"; Boyd's "Rhetoric"; Curtius's "History of Greece"; "Harvard Examination Papers," Leighton; "Young Folks' History of France," Yonge; Murphy's

"Classical and Historical School Atlas"; "Studies from England and Italy," Greene.

Miss Ella M. Hall, Gouverneur, New York, offers the following: "Donovan," "We Two," Edna Lyall; "Victor and Vanquished," M. C. Hay; "Such is Life," Albert Delpit; "Hero Carthew," Louise Parr; "Mona's Choice," Mrs. Alexander; "Miss Jones's Quilting," M. Holley; "The Sign of Four," Conan Doyle; "The Purchase of the North Pole," Jules Verne; "Esther Waters"; "The Two Orphans"; "Black Beauty."

Magazines.

Munsey (complete), 1897; the *Outlook*, 1897; *Cultivator*, 1897; *Country Gentleman*, 1897; the *Queen of Fashion*, 1897; *Harper's Bazar*, 1895; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1895.

Mrs. V. O. Taylor, 158 Whitmarsh Street, Providence, Rhode Island, offers the following books: "Analytical First Reader," by Richard Edwards, LL.D., and J. Russell Webb; Franklin "Second Reader"; Barnes's "National Second Reader"; Hillard's "Sixth Reader"; "Stories of Child Life," Anna B. Badlam; "Geographical Reader and Primer"; Tarbell's "Lessons in Language" (Book II.); Olney's "University Algebra"; Greenleaf's "New Elementary Algebra"; "Normal Union Arithmetic" (Part II.); Warren's "Geographical Questions"; "Fourth Music Reader"; "New Testament" (coarse print).

The Eastport Alliance offer the following books. Address Mrs. O. B. Whalen, Eastport, Maine. "Hoffman's Strange Stories," from the German; "Travels in America," Dwight; "Noble Deeds of Women," Starling; "Gleaning in Europe"; "The Prince of the House of David"; Reid's "Intellectual Powers of Man"; "Memoirs of my Youth," Lamartine; "King Henry V.," Shakspere; "Outlines of Physical Geography," Fitch; Nelson's "United States History"; *Review of Reviews*, 1895; *Munsey's*, 1895; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1895–96; *Success with Flowers*, 1895; one year of odd magazines.

Mrs. Mary P. Harris, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, offers the following books: "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush," Ian Maclaren; "Waverley"; "The Heart of Midlothian"; "The Bride of Lammermoor"; "The Lady of the Lake"; "Auld Licht Idylls"; "Dombey and Son"; "Dorothy Foster"; "The Wreck of the 'Grosvenor.'"

Miss Effie P. Gowell, Dexter House, Lenox Street, Boston, Mass., offers *Mayflower*, 1893–94 (incomplete), *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1896–97 (incomplete), odd numbers of *Good Housekeeping* and *Munsey*.

Miss S. D. Hitch, South Orange, New Jersey, offers odd magazines and *Christian Registers* (old) and Latin, French, and English school books.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 19 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Bulfinch's "Age of Chivalry"; Bellamy's "Looking Backward"; Liefde's "The Charities of Europe."

Educational.

Carpenter's "Rhetoric"; Hill's "Logic"; Whately's "Rhetoric"; "Easy Lessons in Reasoning"; Guyot's "Earth and Man"; Herschel's "Outlines of Astronomy"; Haven's "Mental Philosophy"; Olmsted's "School Astronomy"; Reed and Kellogg, "Elementary Grammar"; Bué's "First Steps in French Idioms"; Bué's "First French Book."

Fiction.

"The Wide, Wide World"; "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush"; "Nicholas Nickleby"; "Oliver Twist"; "Plain Talks from the Hills"; "Ships that pass in the Night"; "Children of Gibeon"; "Robert Elsmere"; "The Stickit Minister"; "John Halifax"; "A Window in Thrums"; "The Little Minister"; "The House of the Wolf"; "Donovan"; "We Two"; "Won by Waiting"; "Pebbles from the Path of a Pilgrim"; "Althea Vernon"; "Zenobia," William Ware; "The Pathfinder"; "The Pilot."

REQUESTS.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from: —

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Jamestown, Chautauqua County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Miss Sadie N. Engell, Seward, New York, asks for "Kindling Thoughts," by Miss E. P. Channing.

Would some one please send me the *Outlook?* Back numbers would be acceptable, as I have seen only one,—October, 1897. Would like any of Edward Eggleston's stories. Mrs. F. E. Briggs, La Centre, Washington.

The number of the magazine in which appeared Thomas Nelson Page's sketch, "Social Life in Old Virginia before the War" (Scribner's probably), is asked for by Mrs. James Newcomb, Sayers, Bexar County, Texas.

Mrs. Mary E. Stovall, Glade Springs, Virginia, asks for magazines or papers, to be passed on after reading.

Mrs. Stacia Hodge, Leander, Texas, asks for reading suitable for herself and husband or her grandchild, eleven years old.

Herman Steelman, Yadkin Valley, Caldwell County, North Carolina, would be glad to receive *Youth's Companion* (current number).

Mrs. L. J. Wilson has moved to Linden, Oklahoma. She asks for copies of "Black Beauty" to give away.

Miss Mary MacNabb Johnston, 76 Abbott Street, Detroit, Michigan, asks for Rev. O. B. Frothingham's "Child's Book of Religion."

Mrs. D. Warner, Grove, Ohio, will be glad to receive current numbers of any magazines.

Mrs. Laura Henderson, Chelsea, Indian Territory, a widow with one boy, six years of age, would gladly accept any good reading.

Mrs. Alice Reeves, Tom Bean, Texas, asks for a kindergarten book to help her instruct her four babies from three to nine years of age.

Mrs. S. R. Lee, 45 19th Street, San Diego, California, lost her home and all contents by fire, and asks that friends remember her with reading.

Miss Isabelle H. Fitz, Librarian of Chester Free Library, Chester, New Hampshire, asks if, after reading, some one will send *Harper's Round Table* and *St. Nicholas?* Miss Fitz writes, "We have only a small sum each year to pay expenses, and it is already used."

Mrs. M. E. Maske, Polkton, North Carolina, would be thankful for any reading for herself and children,—two girls, ten and twelve, and boys, eight and four years.

Mrs. W. H. Green, 608 Jackson Street, Tampa, Florida, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal* (current numbers) and any reading for distribution.

Mrs. Roy Thompson, White Mound, Texas, will be glad of the *Argosy* (current numbers) and pictures for her four-year-old-boy, an invalid from paralysis.

LETTER FROM FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA.

A statement of the wants of this post in the way of good reading, published in *The Cheerful Letter* about a year ago, brought me quite a quantity of papers, magazines, and books, for which I have been very grateful.

But our wants in this regard are constant. My endeavor is to keep up a continuous supply. To do this, I buy what I can afford to myself, and rely upon such as I can interest in the matter to help me. I have been in this work of a chaplain in the United States Army for nearly thirteen years, and nearly all this time at greatly isolated posts, and in doing what I could during all this time to put good reading matter at regular times in the hands of the soldiers. I have felt that I was using a means for the accomplishment of a great amount of good.

At this post we have four companies of infantry, two troops of cavalry, and one company of Indian scouts, making quite a large garrison. We are so far away from any town or community of white people and all general routes of travel as to be denied very many things enjoyed in older parts of the country. Being in the centre of a large Indian reservation not open to white settlers, and surrounded by a large number of Indians,—the Kiowas, Comanches, and a part of the Apaches,—about the most uncivilized aborigines to be found anywhere in our country, we are all shut up to the life of the post and our own resources. The soldier's life, most of the time, is a comparatively idle one, and there are numerous temptations to vicious indulgences; and to be able to supply the soldiers with good reading matter is to furnish them a most valuable means of passing this idle time and a help to resist these allurements to evil. The kindness shown them in this way is very much appreciated. I always manage to have something for the sick in the hospital and the prisoners in the guard-house on each Sunday; and, whenever I can accumulate enough to enable me to do this, I take some reading matter to each of the company and troop barracks on every Sunday. Each company and troop live in one large room, called a barrack, and a bundle of reading matter placed in one of these is within reach of all members of the organization.

All kinds of good reading, secular and religious, papers, magazines, stories, and books, are in demand. There are among the soldiers those of various religious beliefs, and others with no religious affinities of any kind, and a great variety as to both taste and culture. Magazines, stories, and books are specially welcome; and no good healthful reading comes amiss.

Occasionally a society or company of ladies will contribute second-hand magazines, stories, and books that they do not care to retain, and send them to me as freight. A number thus acting together makes the expense light to each one. Our nearest railroad point, twenty-nine miles distant, is Rush Springs, Indian Territory; and anything sent to me there I can have brought to the post in government conveyance.

I have been at this post now almost quite four years, and am likely to remain here for several years to come, to use what kind friends may send me for the benefit of the soldiers. The post, being in an unsettled portion of the country, occupied only by Indians, is certain to be maintained for a good many years more. The Indians here keep up their tribal relations, hold their lands in common, and for the most part live in their old nomadic way. The marked exceptions are Geronimo and his band, captured about eleven years ago in Arizona, and since held as prisoners of war. They have been kept here for about three years, and are near the post on the military reservation, and, under the immediate supervision of army officers, are showing a good deal of thrift and industry. Geronimo, now quite old, is still their chief.

I thank you, and the good people associated with you, for the help you have given me in the past, and am glad to believe that I can still count upon assistance in keeping up the supply of good reading for the soldiers.

B. C. Hammond,
Chaplain of U.S. Army.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.*]

The following puzzle is taken from a book published this year, called "Sphinx Lore." It is one of many bright riddles found between its covers.

RANDOM RHYMES ABOUT BOOK TITLES.

1. My story looks far forward
   Some hundred years or more;
   And yet my title, strange to say,
   Looks not at all before.

2. I tell of a little insect
   Whose chirping night and day
   Brings good luck to the people
   With whom he comes to stay.

3. Charles Reade did write my pages:
   They are both deep and gay.
   If people had my title,
   Hard times would pass away.

4. I am the nicest little boy
   That ever had a "dearest."
   My ringlets, sash, and winsome ways
   Will subjugate the queerest.

5. My diary tells my inmost thoughts,
   My hopes, my aspirations,
   My lovers, pictures, and my voice
   And all my variations.

6. I tell of a happy family,
   Of all their joys and woe;
   Of "Marmee" and her daughters four,
   The best of whom was Jo.

7. One of the signs of the zodiac
   Is synonymous with my name.
   My author is considered grand,
   And mounting up to fame.

8. I sing the light which Milton mourned,
   Withdrawn from daily life,
   Which light forsook an artist
   Struggling for fame and wife.

9. The absorbing interest of my tale
   Is centred round a place
   Where Arab steeds, and Roman, too,
   Contest in chariot-race.

10. Only a little hut am I,
    Not much for you to see;
    But famed all o'er the wide, wide world
    In many a strange countrie.

11. Nowhere is my country,
    Nowhere my native land.
    As punishment, I'm borne about
    From foreign strand to strand.

12. I tell of a race for silver skates
    On the ice of a foreign land,
    Where people frolic on the dykes,
    A free and happy band.

GEOGRAPHICAL PUZZLE.

The answer to each one is a city and the state or country in which the city is situated.

1. A wonderful surgical operation.
2. An Herculean task.
3. What Queen Victoria does.
4. To start a great conflagration.
5. To bestride a peculiar beast.
6. A high-colored State.
7. A disagreeable State.
8. Multiplying an island.

Answers to puzzles in February number.

ARITHMETICAL PUZZLE.

Civil.

ENIGMAS.

1. Lot's wife. 2. Sliver.

DROP LETTER PUZZLE.

1. Height—eight.
2. Pear—ear.
3. Create—crate.
4. Chant—chat.
5. Caress—cares.
6. Climb—limb.
7. Glove—love.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[*Articles for this department should be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline.*]

THE RIGHT TRAINING OF PARENTS.

At a gathering of distinguished ministers and laymen of a leading religious denomination, nearly an entire session was devoted to this topic: "Why is the primary class the most important one in the Sunday-school?" It argued well for the intelligence and thoughtfulness of that large audience that not one member of it disputed the statement involved in the question.

The incident was especially noteworthy, inasmuch as the discussion which followed showed that these earnest thinkers had realized that the early training of little children demanded the first consideration and the best talent.

The time has indeed passed when work among the very youngest is considered a matter of small importance. Never in the history of the world has so much attention been paid to the needs of childhood. Never before have great minds given so much thought and study to all that can advance its interests. And rightly, too, since "the charge of the soul of one of these little ones is a higher employment than the government of all the world." But, while teachers—both religious and secular—are selected with more care, and are more thoroughly disciplined and trained than ever before, the fact is too generally overlooked that the school is not the beginning of the child's training; that much either for good or evil has been done already in the home; that parents are the real helpers or hinderers in the work of true education. It is sad that so few parents realize this; that so many go on rearing their children as their parents did before them, with little or no sense of their responsibility, without knowledge of their failures, without a thought of any more excellent ways. And are they to be altogether

blamed, when no word of help or guidance came from those who are older or more experienced? Well may Herbert Spencer say: "Is it not an astonishing fact that, though on the treatment of offspring depend their lives or deaths, and their moral welfare or ruin, yet not one word of instruction on the treatment of offspring is ever given to those who will hereafter be parents? If a merchant commenced business without any knowledge of arithmetic or book-keeping, we should exclaim at his folly, and look for disastrous consequences. Or if, before studying anatomy, a man set up as a surgical operator, we should wonder at his audacity, and pity his patients. But that parents should begin the difficult task of rearing children without ever having given a thought to the principles—physical, moral, or intellectual—which ought to guide them excites neither surprise at the actors nor pity for their victims." But it is no wonder that, as we look around us, we see in every grade of society poor, helpless little children, who, if they could only make us understand, would cry out against the ill-treatment they receive from their loving but ignorant parents,—children whose stunted minds and perverted souls may be traced back to those earliest influences which are at once the most powerful and the most lasting.

Surely, it is time that all who are interested in the right training of children should awake out of their sleep, and before the education of teachers either secular or religious —before the education of preachers even— put in its proper place the right education of those who are to be parents as of the first and most vital importance. This would obviate many evils which now are incidental in the training of children. Let us glance at a few of these.

Julia M. Terhune, in "Childhood."

(To be continued.)

NATURAL HISTORY.

NOTES ON CLAM-SHELLS.

Continued.

Venus has a pygmy cousin, which we will call the "gem" shell, its scientific name being *Gemma gemma*. It is about as big as a shot, and usually amethystine purple in color. I collect it by sweeping my hand over the beach, where a row of curves of various small objects indicates the limit of the edges of the waves, which have now receded, leaving small shells, seeds of eel-grass, and other light objects lying in scallops along the beach. I filled a basket once with stuff hasily swept up as I was hurrying from an approaching thunder-storm, and, sifting the sand through my fingers afterward, strained out a number of shells new to my collection.

A shell apt to be found in such windrows is the "thin tellen," above mentioned in the list of pseudo clams. It is about half an inch long, somewhat pointed at one end, and rounded at the other; usually white, but often iridescent, when closely examined, and occasionally flushed with rose-color. I was delighted when I found my first rose one, as it seemed to lessen my incredulity as to this thin and plain little shell being of the same genus as the beautiful "sunset-shell" which all our friends who go to Nassau are sure to bring us back. That is *Tellina radiata*, and is pale lemon-color, or often rayed with rosy streaks.

Macoma fusca, a flat, rounded shell, an inch or more across, also belongs to the Tellinidæ; and, though the shells are coarse and dark-colored when the animals live in muddy bays, they are white and delicate or occasionally rosy-tinged when the animal resides on clean, sandy beaches. Thus we see that a shell not pretty in one locality may be so in another.

The shell of Saxicava is always white, and has square ends. Though called "the rock-dweller," I always find it among the roots of the seaweeds cast up on the beach. But it is said to bore holes in limestone where limestone is abundant. It is apt to be distorted and irregular, and has had about fifteen different names given to it, whereas they are probably all "the arctic Saxicava." The animal spins a byssus.

Petricola is another white shell, but less clam-like than some of them, being more slender and ruffled or frilled at one end. Heilprin calls it "the stone-dweller," and describes it as boring through cakes or blocks of stiff gray or blue clay, cast up after storms on the New Jersey shore, the clay being matted together by vegetable fibres. But the process by which it bores is not well made out. It is so fragile that it may well seek a safe retreat. By the

by, are the occupants of all fragile shells borers or burrowers? The family next described would seem to confirm this hypothesis.

It is the razor-clam family, or Solenidæ. The shells are all very fragile, and covered with a beautiful polished epidermis. The pallial line is deeply indented,—in the razor-clam, doubled on itself. This animal is also called the Long Clam and Knife-handle. "It may often be seen at low tide, projecting a little above the level of the sand; but, if touched or disturbed, it descends with astonishing rapidity and force, much to the amazement of him who may lay hold of it, thinking to make an easy capture." The shell, long as it is (six inches in the adult), is not quite long enough to cover the animal. It has rudimentary eyes at the tips of the siphons.

A shell of the same appearance and texture plainly shows its cousinship; but it is rounded, not squared off at the ends. It has been called *Solen costatus*, *Machœra costata*, *Siliqua costata*. The worst of shells is that different naturalists have given them different names, some not realizing that others have described them, or thinking that the shell or the animal possessed relationships which would not permit its remaining where it has been placed. The tendency now is, as to plants and animals both, to go back to the first name given by the first man who published a description of the species. This may make things convenient for the next generation of learners, but is perplexing to us of the transition period. And so few people have studied shells that many have no "common names." I have long wanted to have a trivial name for the Machæra. "Rayed Razor-clam" is too alliterative.

A bewitching little shell belonging to this family might be called "the fringed razor-clam." It is quite small, not over an inch long; and the delicate epidermis extends beyond the edge of the shell, and is cut into a sort of fringe, the shell being highly polished, marked with radiating lines, and so light that a breath will blow it away, and a look almost crush it.

One other of our "siphonated friends," as Heilprin calls them, I should like to describe here, leaving scallops and mussels for another number; but the "surf clam" has been already referred to as having bracket-shelves or "spoon-shaped" processes for the reception of the cartilage. Young specimens of this shell are very common, and adults are found after storms. It is the largest of our New England bivalves, and it is said the Indians used it to hoe corn with. Housekeepers seek it to use as sugar scoops or soap dishes, and young artists paint light-houses or other marine views on its concave interior. On the coast on Long Island it is called "Beach Clam," "Surf Clam," or "Dipper Clam," and on Cape Cod "Hen Clam." "The animal is sometimes eaten, but is apt to induce severe pain."

C. H. Clarke.

IN CHURCH.

Just in front of my pew sits a maiden,
A little brown wing on her hat,
With its touches of tropical azure,
And sheen of the sun upon that.
Through the bloom-colored pane shines a glory
By which the vast shadows are stirred;
But I pine for the spirit and splendor
That painted the wing of the bird.

The organ rolls down its great anthem,
With the soul of a song it is blent;
But, for me, I am sick for the singing
Of one little song that is spent.
The voice of the curate is gentle:
"No sparrow shall fall to the ground";
But the poor broken wing on the bonnet
Is mocking the merciful sound.

JUST FOR A HAT.

Think what a price to pay,
Faces so bright and gay,
Just for a hat!
Flowers unvisited, mornings unsung,
Sea-ranges bare of the wings that o'erswung,—
Bared just for that!

Caught 'mid some mother work,
Torn by a hunter Turk,
Just for your hat!
Plenty of mother-heart yet in the world:
All the more wings to tear, carefully twirled;
Women want that?

Oh for the shame of it!
Oh, but the blame of it,—
Price of a hat!
Just for a jauntiness brightening the street!
This is your halo, O faces so sweet:
Death; and for that!

—*William C. Gannett.*

THE CONSCIENCE AND FUTURE JUDGMENT.

I sat alone with my conscience,
In a place where Time had ceased;
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased.
And I felt I should have to answer
The question it put to me,
And to face the answer and question
Throughout an eternity.
The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things that I thought were dead things
Were alive with a terrible might.
And the vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face,
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that solemnly silent place.
And I thought of a far-away warning,
Of a sorrow that was to be mine,
In a land that then was the future,
But now is the present time.
And I thought of my former thinking
Of the judgment-day to be,
But sitting alone with my conscience
Seemed judgment enough for me.
And I wondered if there was a future
To this land beyond the grave;
But no one gave me an answer,
And no one came to save.
Then I felt that the future was present,
And the present would never go by;
For it was but the thought of my past life
Grown into eternity.
Then I woke from my timely dreaming,
And the vision passed away;
And I knew the far-away warning
Was a warning of yesterday.
And I pray that I may not forget it,
In this land before the grave;
That I may not cry in the future,
And no one come to save.
And so I have learnt a lesson
Which I ought to have known before,
And which, though I learnt it dreaming,
I hope to forget no more.
So I sit alone with my conscience
In the place where the years increase,
And I try to remember the future
In the land where Time will cease.
And I know of the future judgment,
How dreadful soe'er it be,
That to sit alone with my conscience
Will be judgment enough for me.

—*London Spectator.*

God's hour to crush out a wrong is the hour his children are willing to do their part.—*Iowa Signal.*

Do the truth you know, and you shall learn the truth you need to know.—*George MacDonald.*

RELIGION IN OUR WORK.

Why should starting the fire in my stove be such an irksome task? Why may I not arrange the kindling wood carefully, not to say reverentially, put some mind into it, and dispose of it in such fashion that, when ignited, it shall burn to the best advantage? May there not be a sinful way and a righteous way of making a fire? Are not such faculties given us by the Creator to be used to the best advantage in every act?

Does religion indorse carelessness? Should not religion be a matter permeating and influencing every act in life? Look at my clothes in this room. Flung about wickedly, disposed unrighteously, two places for every one article, and the only place for it where it happens now to be. Is this religion?

Why am I so long dressing in the morning? Because I cannot find a sock. Where is it found after a ten minutes' search? Behind my trunk or behind my bed, where, last night, I impiously flung it, disregarding the injunction, "What thou doest, do with thy might." I flung it with all my might somewhere. Is that the application of the text? May it not mean that, in pulling off and disposing of that sock, I should, for ever so little time, have bestowed on it all my might of care and attention, so that I could to a certainty have put my hand on it in the morning, and saved that ten minutes' strength used in looking after it, for other uses? How vast is the aggregate of force I waste through these so-called trivial neglects! Worse still, the slovenly act has become the fixed habit, the second nature. I am appalled, in the endeavor to reform, to find that it extends down to the tying of my shoe-strings. I find it cropping out when I put coal in the stove or water in the tea-kettle. I pour the coal in irreverently and carelessly. Some goes into the stove, some on it, some on the floor. So with the tea-kettle, I pour some water in, more or less out.

What though I profess ten thousand religions, shall I ever be happy if I keep on in this way?—*The Swamp Angel.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

WE ARE VERY ANXIOUS TO INCREASE OUR SUBSCRIPTION LIST, AND THEREFORE ASK OUR FRIENDS IF EACH WILL TRY TO GET US ONE NEW SUBSCRIBER THIS YEAR.

2,000 SUBSCRIBERS WOULD PUT OUR PAPER ON A GOOD FINANCIAL BASIS, AND ENABLE US TO DO BETTER WORK. THOSE NOT WISHING THE PAPER SENT TO THEM CAN HAVE IT SENT DIRECT FROM THE OFFICE TO A "SHUT-IN."

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on the first Friday in April at 10.30 A.M. at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

Subscribers to *The Cheerful Letter* are kindly requested to send subscriptions to the *Treasurer*, not to the Editor.

In sending requests or offers of books, it is essential to address these communications to the *Book Club* (Secretary Mrs. W. B. Nichols). If addressed to the Editor these letters are in some cases postponed; in others altogether omitted. See directions in every number of *The Cheerful Letter*.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe; 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.